1. Hello, how are you? What's up in Finland?

PETE: Hello, mate! Things are a little bit better now, than it has been for quite some time, at least on a personal level. The new upcoming Kouristus album "Mielen Ja Maailman Rappio" is something to wait for. Then again, besides that, the world is going down with all the wars and humanity's stupidity, greed and self-destructive behavior. That sucks major shit!

VILLE: Hello, doing good. Finland is once again cold and dark for a few months also rainy and windy and all that shit, but we have gotten used to this so i guess everything is cool.

2. What does KOURISTUS mean? For whatever reasons, it reminds me of the digestive disorder we call TOURISTA in France (Were your guts are inside out and diarrhea is hitting strong AhAh) but I don't think it's linked... You're not much into gore musically, or lyrically, and you're closer to "serious grind", right?

PETE: Kouristus is roughly translated as "Convulsion", "Spasm", "Cramp" or something similar. "Tourista" seems a legit type of translation too, to be honest. Twisting guts and bloody diarrhea! With our lyrics, there are some stuff that discuss some sort of gore stuff, also some horror aesthetics - everything from horror movies to real life horrors, like wars, massacres, mass graves, nuclear holocaust... the destruction of mankind.
There are the serious stuff included but some dark humor involved too, at least a little bit. We just don't want to get too humorous, don't want us to be a pure joke band. The lyrics of our new (upcoming) album discuss issues like mental health, genocide, self-destruction, suicide and other self-harm. There are stories about karma too... you know, someday you'll finally get what you have been deserving for a long, long time. And you will pay the price for what you have done - with your life. While you pay, we will play - we shall dance on your grave.

VILLE: Kouristus means spasm, by not going to details there is some dark personal history behind the name and it came up when we started to play and had some beers and shared some personal stories. Songs are pretty much telling about hopelessness and the name fits perfectly for us, so in the way you can call this shit serious but it's more about suffering from a perspective of an individual than to be straight out political or something. Of course you can make it political because politics sucks and is the root of suffering.

3. On the previous releases, your music was rather varied but always in the "Punk hardcore" spectrum: I can find some old punk Hc, some fast hardcore, some grindcore, fastcore... Is KOURISTUS a "best of" of all you enjoy in the "core styles"? When you introduce the band to a new friend, how do you describe your style: Is it "Noise", "hardcore", "grind" or something else?

PETE: Well, it's kinda hard to describe our stuff precisely since we have loads of influences mixed together, depending on the track.
When Jeekki (bass) and Ville (drums) started to put up the band, their first motivation and plan was to make a grindcore band. Of course me, myself think a good grindcore band has some hardcore punk elements with it, definitely. So I did bring the hardcore punk type of vocals with me. I had been on a couple of hardcorepunk / 82hc / crust bands before Kouristus, so I come more from that stuff than growling death metal vocal style.
I think our sound started to evolve from the start and has been evolving during the times. All the members have been listening through many different music genres, so everybody brings their own influences to the mixture. The band has a background of playing death metal (Jeekki is our own Alex Webster!), black metal, trash, punkrock, hardcorepunk, d-beat, crustpunk, trash etc., you name it. So, to describe our style, I guess we should say something like "Grindcore/Hardcore since 2013" (quoted straight from our Bandcamp, haha!). It's really hard to put us under a certain category. We try to play fast and aggressive music and differ the songs sometimes to little bit slower and more groovy d-beat stuff too (with a hint of ROCK N' ROLL, of course!). Get a hold of our albums n' tracks, listen them thru yourself and define our "style" by yourself.

4. Which bands do you think were big influences on your music or sound quite similar in noise? Is it mostly about old, or also newer outfits?

PETE: We all have our own influences but we share a lot of the same influences too. For me there are old and new influences. LOTS of influences but let's try to keep the list somewhat compact because you ALWAYS forget something. To name a few: Napalm Death, Nasum, Uutuus, Totuus, Cannibal Corpse, Sepultura, Slayer, Skitsystem, Perikato, Facada (from Brazil). AND a bonus mention, just because this band rules and they are really cool guys: Vazio (black metal from São Paulo, Brazil. Cheers guys!)

JEEKKI: Nasum, Rotten sound, Rattus, Terveet kädet and stuff like that

LARSKA: Napalm Death and swedish d-beat

5. You told me you have a new release almost ready, and I even heard some of it on youtube... It seems to me some songs are faster than the previous releases, the drummer kicks very fast! AhAh. Why are you so angry? :) It seems some of these new songs are more grindcore than your previous releases, or maybe something like "modern grind" (I think about the bands who play it simple/ old school in the riffs, but with faster tempos in the blasts than the old bands...). Then on a few songs, I felt like listening to something like black metal, or maybe like the punk influenced black metal IMPALED NAZARENE played on an old album ("Suomi Finland Perkele"), is this a possible influence, or was my mind frozen by too much of coldness? Can you tell us more about this new recording?

VILLE: In the process of making music, songs are coming very naturally. We don't spend much time making a release. Songs for the new album were completed in three days and recorded in three hours. Kouristus dudes are listening music in such wide range and the influences are mixing together without really thinking about it, but there are riffs from three guys so it brings some variety to the mix. It's been the same way from the beginning and it seems to work with us, ofc we would like Pete to make a riff or two someday as well :)) The drums are played by pushing it a bit off limits so it kinda sounds like it could fall apart in any second, it's not the healthiest way of playing but it brings some kind of danger and uncertainty to our music, it kinda feels bad and sounds terrible, haha.

PETE: Some songs are faster indeed. There's definitely loads of death and black metal influences there too. A mixture of death, grind, black and hardcore. We like to keep our stuff harsh. Fast and brutal tracks but occasionally slower groovy d-beat songs to give some time to breathe, to give the album more variation.
Punk/hardcore influenced black metal isn't far-fetched on some occasions, on some tracks.
"Mielen Ja Maailman Rappio" is a really fucking good record. The album isn't for everybody, not everyone can cope with it and that's the way it should be. We are really proud of it! If there's even one person who likes the album, well, that's enough. No compromise. Not a chance in hell that we're gonna start pleasing people by kissing their asses. Not a fucking chance some asshole would dictate anything we do with our music.
" You come from out of nowhere n' say I do it wrong
What the fuck are you on?
So fuck off!"

6. When you record do you prefer to play everything together, more or less live, or are you rather the guys who need 10 takes on the same riff to make it sound perfect? (Unfortunately "sounding perfect" isn't always synonymous with emotional intensity or crushing with the grind hammer, and some very "professional" releases

taste quite flat at the end...)

JEEKKI: Everything is recorded live, we never sound perfect

VILLE: We have recorded almost every release live, then doupling the guitar and vox on top, it’s been working good and we don't know any other way to do it with Kouristus. It was clear from the beginning that it's gonna be very home made sound recorded on one or two takes max, so there is mistakes to be found, hehe.

7. What do you think about noisecore? I have in mind the very short songs Napalm Death recorded a long time ago ("You suffer"... "Dead?"), but some bands didn't record only two songs in this style, they fulfill releases with very short songs only and you get 50 tracks in 20 minutes AhAh. Do you sometimes play such short songs? I tend to think noisecore took the concept of grindcore to its more "extreme extremity" (For the best/ most intense bands at least)... Would you agree with this?

PETE: I like noisecore on some occasions. It depends on the day, what mood I'm in. We have this song called "Köyhä" from the album "Mielisairaan Muistelmat (2015)". It's a nod towards Napalm's "You Suffer", of course. We have played it on every gig we've ever played, after the track was "COMPOSED", haha. One of our best songs!

VILLE: We actually have one 5sec song entitled "Köyhä" from the album "Mielisairaan Muistelmat". It is total tribute to early Napalm Death which we all love ofc, and we also have these 20-30 second songs and we actually at first supposed to only make songs that length with only blastbeats but these d-beat riffs just started to pop out from nowhere, hah.

8. Your vocalist is also doing artworks and paintings under the VISUAL DISTURBANCE name. He comes up with some very cool stuffs... What kind of graphical training did he follow? Is that his job or just a hobby? What are the artworks/ CD covers he's the proudest of?

PETE: Well, I started doodling at an early age and trained with some good mentors. A relative of mine showed how to draw with a marker and how to do some shadings. Part of that practicing was just copying and copying cool skulls from tattoo magazines etc. Also skateboarding and the deck artwork had good influence on my drawing skills.
Somehow around junior high school I lost ALL interest on drawing or painting and it took for 3-4 years before I started again. When I went to college I had a really nice and motivational art class teacher and the school was actually a little bit more art based school - there were more art classes to pick than most of high schools that

time. Art classes weren't forced but if you were interested, there were great opportunities to study more art. Gotta say - my art teacher was a HUGE influence on me... I guess he saw something in me that I didn't see myself.
After graduating high school I went to Liminka School of Arts, to study comics but I did loads of different medias too (drawings, paintings and art graphics). During that time I applied to study at Tampere University of Applied Sciences, tried to get to study Graphic Design (Visual Design). I got eventually in. Graduated from the school around 2008/2009. And THAT, ladies and gentlemen, was a FUCKING MIRACLE, I KID YOU NOT.
After graduation I worked some time in an advertising agency, doing prints, web design, animation etc., but kinda burned out and lost all my inspiration for years, once more. Got sick of it basically and went totally lost / blank / depressed. Visual arts didn't hold any importance whatsoever. It was all meaningless. Corporate puking material without any integrity. Paintings and drawings didn't hold any value too. I'd rather drink myself to death than look at all this fucking shit. And I tried.
Nowadays I tend to do "underground" work mainly. Gig posters, flyers, band logos, album covers, you name it. Whatever gets me motivated. I guess you could say making art is more of a way of life than... a hobby, or a job. Can't live with it, can't live without it. Hopefully no more collisions, no more burnouts.

My proudest artwork or cover? Hmmm... It's always a hard one, because my mind tends to change on daily basis and so does my favorite artwork or cover. Can't really put out only ONE piece of art so I'll give a few examples:

- "Remissions 10inch" (cover artwork, front cover).
Love this one! Good black and white painting with rough surfaces and dark mood. I remember this was painted ready relatively fast. One of those paintings that just clicked instantly. It was weird. Like I was guided by some (EVIL) force! Did it with acrylics, ink, brushes and a palette knife. Maybe the palette knife was just the right thing to use. It gave the painting this good roughness..

- "Terveet Kädet - Ihmisen Poika, Pedon Poika 10inch" (front cover).
Well, Terveet Kädet is Terveet Kädet, you know what I mean?
It was an honor to do the painting. And LÄJÄ told me YES!

- "Demonic Death Judge - Poisoner" (shirt design).
There are lots of things going on the front design, you should check it. I designed an alternative band logo for the sleeves also. The band dudes were cool too, to do a collaboration with me. No hassle, no problems and the print came out good. I recommend to buy the shirt - A cool looking longsleeve shirt from DEMONIC DEATH JUDGE!
It's FUCKIN' TOXIC GREEN!

- "The Scum Orchestra - When Chaos Becomes Order" (CD/LP cover artwork) AND "Smoke Alarm" (Shirt Design + A2 print/poster). Both of them were inked and digitally colored by using Wacom drawing table + Photoshop. More of a cartoonish style. Smooth stuff.

I guess that's about it. Loads of other art pieces to mention but don't want to waste readers' time. If you like to follow my doings and artworkings, go check my portfolio sites:
-> www.instagram.com/khaaosink
-> www.facebook.com/khaaosink
-> www.khaaosink.wordpress.com
-> khaaosink@gmail.com

9. Finland is the "country of social distancing", I recently discovered peoples are used to stay far from each others at bus stops, and don't talk so easily to persons in the street or strangers they don't know... Can we say the Finns are solitary, or even asocial peoples?
Well, how are metallers doing for pogos, stage diving and headbanding during gigs? AhAh
Is social distancing something you appreciate, and where do you think it comes from? Perhaps it's due to some contagious diseases that invaded Finland centuries ago? Or maybe you have not so fond/ subconscious memories of Vikings invading your towns with their rusty axes? AhAh

PETE: There's definitely this social distancing, a lot of it, haha. I guess it depends on the people, some are totally antisocial and some aren't that much BUT Finns seem to hate each other at least on some level. There's a lot of jealousy and bitterness in our culture. Maybe it's written in our DNA, OR the main reason comes from far away... some ancient trauma or diseases, like you said. Finns are bitter and jealous CUNTS to be honest. Cold, bitter and suicidal.
The music scene seems to be somewhat an exception. There is pogoing, mosh pits and stuff like that, at least some times. At gigs you can find this some sort of unity, and people are more relaxed, talking to each other, having a laugh.... BUT! (Ha-haaaa) Not always! GOT YA!
I really fucking hate this certain type of posing human garbages in the front row or whatever the row they are... like this type of group of people just whining and crying, with their faces looking like they've swallowed 10 litres of bloody diarrhea and they've just came to the venue to be assholes, poisoning the fun, killing the atmosphere. Some of those shit slingshots turn into these full blown diarrhea machine guns that like to proof their "knowledge and status" by complaining, about everything.
If you don't like the bands or the event, then why would you torture yourself? Why

won't you just stay at home and stay there, pleasing yourself while watching Teletubbies (no offence against Teletubbies, those bastard rule!) or some shit. Got a little bit lost there. Sorry.

VILLE: Fucking Vikings :DDDD but yes, Finland is a bit quiet maybe and melancholic, lots of depression and alcoholism, not only that of course but maybe the winter is a bit too long for some peoples, I don't know, but you definitely can mind your business here in the city. No one is going to talk with you if you don't start talking, maybe not even then, hah. At the shows it's different, peoples are usually very active when there is decent party going on.

10. Finland is also known to be a country with very long and dark nights... In the middle of winter, you won't see the light of the day for more than a few short hours... At the time I'm typing these questions we're at the end of November, and the darkness is coming... Are you ready for this? How does it feel to live in this "Grip of darkness and winter"? Did you get used to that or is this always a bit hard to get in the "full night mode"?

PETE: From darkness and coldness you can find wonderful things if you know how to channel it. The cold and darkness can be your friend if you embrace it. Or you can just simply put a noose around your neck and hang around for the final time.

LARSKA: The snow helps with the darkness, it will make surroundings more brighter even when it's dark.

VILLE: Yeah, the winter is dark and long and it normally gets really cold at some point on January or February. For me personally it doesn't matter what is the weather outside, when you got shit to do you do it anyway, and it's always nice when spring comes and it's getting warm and then the mosquitos attack and all that shit, haha.

11. Tell us more about your local grind, punk and metal scene: Can you quote some bands worth checking out, or some labels with some nice releases?

PETE: I haven't been THAT active following pretty much anything for a while, somehow. Maybe on some point I just got fed up / depressed and kinda lost interest on everything. I stopped going to gigs and stopped following stuff for a while. Even stopped listening to music completely, which is kinda strange. But I'll try to answer something... (Been feeling a bit better nowadays, though).
The last gig we had was with "Harmer", "Abysmal Rites" and "Fading Trail". Those bands are worth checking out - especially live, because they pretty much kicked

ass. Secondly I'll mention bands from two other gigs we did just before. Check out the band "Jumalation" (I bet there are lots of punk/hardcore/trash people who are familiar with these dudes.) Also check out "Hautaustoimisto" and "Sgt. Slime". We had a blast with those bands too. Good stuff, good gigs and we had a really good time.
Hmmm, couple of more... check out "Kovaa Rasvaa","Kürøishi", "Aivoproteesi", "Putkipommi", "Pervitin", "Konkurssi", "Dehumanisaatio", "Aresti", "Tuhoon Tuomitut", "Kahleet", "Unearthly Rites", "C.F.G.", "Shock Ward", "Decreation", "Remissions"... There are loads and loads of good bands. There's no way to list them all... Did I say... SSSSLLLAAAAYYYEERRRRRRR? (NOT from Finland ;))
About labels... hmmm... well the last LPs I bought from "Gate of Deliria" distro/label. Then there's the legendary "Kämäset Levyt Records" (Hi Jukkeli!). "Tuska & Ahdistus Records" is a good one too, but I'm not sure if Tero is still active with it. "Fight Records" is a legendary one too. "Svart Records" is a bigger one, with lots of releases and artists. Um, and check out "VapaaPäivä" (label, distro & zine), too!

12. This is the last question... Tell us about your next projects... It's time to conclude before the final obliteration.

JEEKKI: Next project will be split Ep with Brazilian band Ferida Aberta

PETE: Like Jeekki said: the split EP. AND hopefully some gigs too. These days we are kicking ass live! HA! And of course the upcoming new album "Mielen Ja Maailman Rappio" is a huge thing for us, so promoting it and forcing that stuff down everybody's throat whether they like it or not.

LARSKA: Playing gigs!

www.kouristusgrind.bandcamp.com
www.kouristus.bandcamp.com
www.instagram.com/kouristus.grindcore
www.facebook.com/kouristus

KOURISTUS
Interview for Nihilistic Holocaust / Visceral Circuitry
12/27/2024

KOURISTUS:

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